

July 27, 2021 Council Meeting

The regular meeting of the Council of the City of Martinsville, Virginia was held on July 27, 2021 in Council Chambers, Municipal Building, at 7:00 PM with Mayor Kathy Lawson presiding. Other Council Members present included Danny Turner, Jennifer Bowles, and Tammy Pearson. Staff present included City Manager Leon Towarnicki, Assistant City Manager/City Attorney Eric Monday, Clerk of Council Karen Roberts, Community Development Director Mark McCaskill, Police Chief Eddie Cassady, Deputy Police Chief Rob Fincher, Police Captain Chad Rhoads, Lieutenant Jim Minter, Building Inspector Kris Bridges, Fire Chief Ted Anderson, and Deputy Fire Chief Kris Schrader.

Mayor Lawson called the meeting to order and advised Council would go into Closed Session beginning at 6:00 PM. In accordance with section 2.1-344 (A) Code of Virginia (1950, and as amended) and upon a motion by Vice Mayor Bowles, seconded by Council Member Turner with the following 3-0 recorded vote: Vice Mayor Bowles, aye; Council Member Turner, aye; and Mayor Lawson, aye. Council Member Martin had a conflict with his employment resulting in his inability to attend the meeting in person. City Attorney Monday referenced Virginia Code 2.2-3708.2(A (1b) which would give Martin the option to participate in the Council meeting by phone. Vice Mayor Bowles made a motion to allow Martin to participate telephonically; Council Member Turner seconded the motion with the three present Council Members voting in favor. Council convened in Closed Session to discuss the following matters: (A) Appointments to boards and commissions, as authorized by Subsection 1, (B) Discussion or consideration of the investment of public funds where competition or bargaining is involved, where, if made public initially, the financial interest of the governmental unit would be adversely affected, as authorized by Subsection 6, and (C) Consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members, attorneys or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, or other specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel, as authorized by Subsection 7. Council Member Pearson arrived during Closed Session at 6:20pm. At the conclusion of Closed Session, each returning member of Council certified that (1) only public business matters exempt from open meeting requirements were discussed in said Closed Session; and (2) only those business matters identified in the motion convening the Closed Session were heard, discussed, or considered during the meeting. A motion was made by Vice Mayor Bowles; seconded by Council Member Turner with the following 5-0 recorded vote in favor to recess Closed Session and return to Open Session: Mayor Lawson, aye; Vice Mayor Bowles, aye; Council Member Turner, aye; Council Member Martin, aye and Council Member Pearson, aye.

Vice Mayor Bowles made a motion to reappoint Jane Gardner to the Blue Ridge Regional Library Governing Board for a 4-year term ending June 30, 2025. Council Member Pearson seconded the motion with all Council Members voting in favor. Council Member Turner made a motion to appoint Avenell Jordan to the Southern Area Agency on Aging Board of Directors for a 3-year term ending February 28, 2024. Vice Mayor Bowles seconded the motion with all Council Members voting in favor.

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Next was consultation with legal counsel with regards to the opioid litigation. Council was asked to approve a resolution to approve a Memorandum of Understanding with the Attorney General to participate in the Virginia Opioid settlement. City Attorney Monday explained there are a number of states and localities around the nation that are in litigation with opioid manufacturers, pharmaceutical distributors and companies and insurance brokerage entities that provided coverage for these medications. Martinsville is not a member of that multidistrict litigation, we have our own freestanding litigation pending in Circuit Court but we will be participating in the Virginia opioid settlement fund. Martinsville is the only locality doing this. Vice Mayor Bowles made a motion to approve the resolution; Council Member Pearson seconded the motion with the following roll call: Martin, aye; Turner, aye; Lawson, aye; Bowles, aye; and Pearson, aye.

Vice Mayor Bowles asked the City Attorney to provide some brief remarks and a little history of the Martinsville Seven. Bowles has been working independently outside of Council along with outside agencies like the Martinsville Historical Society and FAHI to come up with a cohesive plan for all members of the community. City Attorney Monday explained that Bowles resolution is for City Council to request the governor to grant a posthumous reprieve to the Martinsville Seven and to order a commutation of the death sentences. Most members of the community are familiar with the 1949 case where seven black members of the community were charged, convicted and ordered to death for the rape of a white woman. Under principles of modern jurisprudence, these men, regardless of their guilt or innocence would not have been executed for these crimes if the trials were held today. The punishment did not fit the crime. Council Member Pearson made a motion to approve the resolution, Vice Mayor Bowles seconded the motion. Council Member Turner asked that it be amended that Council does not question the guilt or innocence of the Martinsville Seven. Bowles asked that neither innocence nor guilt be looked at in this situation. There was no second to Turner's amendment. The resolution was adopted with the following roll call vote: Council Member Pearson, aye; Council Member Martin, aye; Vice Mayor Bowles, aye; Mayor Lawson, aye; and Council Member Turner, aye. No other action was taken out of Closed Session.

Following the Pledge to the American Flag and invocation by Mayor Lawson, Lawson welcomed everyone to the meeting. Mayor Lawson explained that the meeting would follow COVID guidelines, allowing limited attendance and recognizing social distancing recommendations.

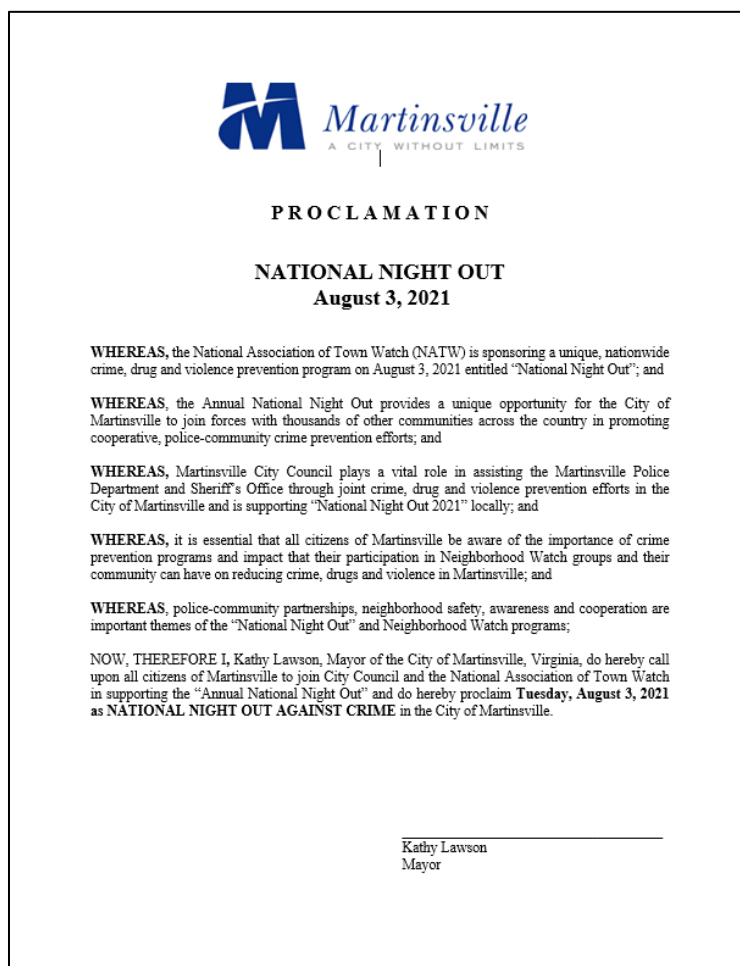
Approve minutes from the June 22, 2021 Council Meeting – Vice Mayor Bowles made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Council Member Turner seconded the motion with all Council Members voting in favor.

Hear an update regarding a pilot project in the City of Martinsville by The Alliance for National and Community Resilience – Building Inspector Kris Bridges turned the meeting over to Ryan Colker, Executive Director of the Alliance for National and Community Resilience who

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participated by Zoom. Colker explained that ANCR is proud to provide Martinsville City with an Essential Designation under the buildings benchmark and an Enhanced Designation under the housing benchmark. He hopes the City will use these designations as tools to support economic development. Council Member Martin thanked Bridges, Community Development Director Mark McCaskill and others who worked on this project for their hard work. Bridges thanked Council for their support, this recognition is proof that Martinsville is resilient for the citizens. Public education and solar projects are subjects that need more focus. Bridges explained that his goal is to have an “exceptional” rating by 2030. Martinsville is the only (and first) City in the country with these recognitions.

Presentation of proclamation regarding Tuesday, August 3 2021 National Night Out Council Member Pearson read the proclamation which was presented to Police Chief Eddie Cassady and Deputy Police Chief Rob Fincher. Cassady invited Council and residents to National Night Out at the Farmers Market and he thanked the residents.



Consider approval of proposed amendments to the Transportation Plan and Land Use Plan section of the City's Comprehensive Plan – Planning Commission Chairman Joseph Martin stated that all five board members were present and would represent a quorum. Martin read the Resolution which all Planning Commission members approved. Vice Mayor Bowles made a motion to approve the proposed amendments as presented. Council Member Pearson seconded the motion. Pearson said that she had met with Chairman Martin, she feels there is a good plan

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implemented and the City needs to think less about now and more about the future. All Council Members voted in favor with a roll call vote: Vice Mayor Bowles, aye; Council Member Pearson, aye; Council Member Martin, aye; Mayor Lawson, aye; and Council Member Turner, aye.



Transmittal of Planning Commission Action

Date: July 21, 2021
To: Leon Towarnicki, City Manager
CC: Mark McCaskill, Director of Community Development
From: Hannah L. Powell, Community Development Specialist
RE: Amendments to the Martinsville Comprehensive Plan

BACKGROUND:

On the evening of June 17, 2021, the Martinsville Planning Commission held a public hearing regarding amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. Following the public hearing and discussion, the Planning Commission recommended APPROVAL of the proposed amendments by a vote of 5-0-2-0 (Absent- J. Hairston, L. Watkins). There were no public comments received during the advertised public hearing.

Upon action and recommendation of the Planning Commission, City Council held the required public hearing on June 22, 2021. City Council determined that more review of the draft plans was necessary and took no action, intending to continue the discussion at the July 27, 2021 meeting. There were no public comments received during the advertised public hearing.

The Planning Commission will be meeting jointly with Council at its July 27, 2021 meeting. A Resolution has been drafted to certify the recommendation of approval from the Planning Commission to City Council. Once this item is reached on Council's agenda, the Planning Commission will be given an opportunity to open their meeting, discuss, vote on the resolution, and then make that recommendation to Council.

Department of Community Development, 55 W. Church Street Martinsville VA 24112, 276-403-5156

NEXT STEPS:

In order for the proposed amendments to move forward, City Council must vote to approve the Resolution incorporating said amendments into the 2021 Martinsville Comprehensive Plan.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff respectively recommends that the City Council of Martinsville consider and approve the attached Resolution which will incorporate the amendments as presented in the two (2) draft plans into the 2021 Martinsville Comprehensive Plan.

SUGGESTED MOTION

I find that the proposed amendments to the Martinsville Comprehensive Plan, specifically the sections as presented in draft form titled "Land Use Plan", dated 10/29/20 and "Transportation Plan" dated 3/8/21, will promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the public and implement the City's adopted Comprehensive Plan for the orderly future development of the City. Therefore, I make a motion to APPROVE the Resolution incorporating these amendments into the 2021 Martinsville Comprehensive Plan.

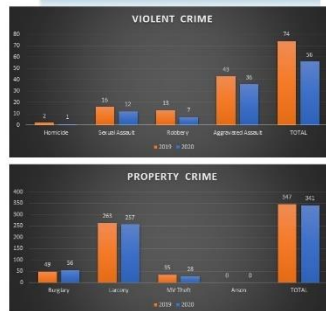
Department of Community Development, 55 W. Church Street Martinsville VA 24112, 276-403-5156

Hear a presentation from the Police Department regarding their 2020 Annual Report – Police Chief Eddie Cassady and Deputy Police Chief Rob Fincher presented a PowerPoint to update Council on the 2020 Annual Report. Also present was Lieutenant Jim Minter and Captain Chad Rhoads.



**2020
ANNUAL REPORT**

YEAR IN REVIEW

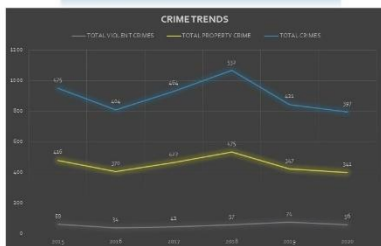


TOTAL CRIME 2020 397

TOTAL CRIME 2019 421

5.7% DECREASE IN CRIME

CRIME TRENDS



DEFINITION OF SELECT GROUP A OFFENSES:

VIOLENT CRIMES: Homicide, Sexual Assaults, Robbery and Aggravated Assaults

CRIME AGAINST PROPERTY: Burglary, Larceny (including Shoplifting), Motor Vehicle Theft and Arson

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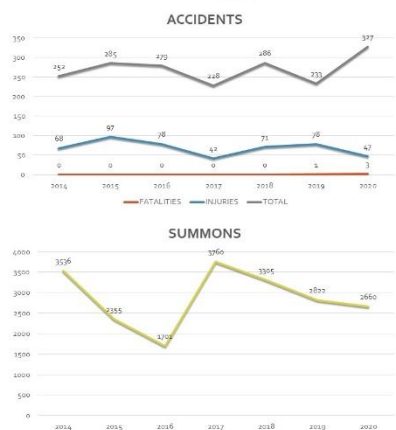
COMMUNITY POLICING IN ACTION

| | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|-----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| TOTAL HOMICIDE | 2 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| TOTAL SEXUAL ASSAULT | 13 | 12 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 16 | 12 |
| ROBBERY | 12 | 8 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 13 | 7 |
| AGGRAVATED ASSAULT | 29 | 38 | 26 | 31 | 41 | 43 | 36 |
| TOTAL VIOLENT CRIMES | 56 | 59 | 34 | 42 | 57 | 74 | 56 |
| BURGLARY | 58 | 54 | 51 | 70 | 72 | 49 | 56 |
| LARCENY | 313 | 344 | 292 | 327 | 370 | 263 | 257 |
| MV THEFT | 18 | 14 | 23 | 25 | 33 | 35 | 28 |
| ARSON | 2 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL PROPERTY CRIME | 391 | 416 | 370 | 422 | 475 | 347 | 341 |
| TOTAL CRIMES | 447 | 475 | 404 | 464 | 532 | 421 | 397 |

Community Policing is vital to our department. The presence of our officers can help defer crime and let citizens know we are here to help.

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TRAFFIC



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CALLS FOR SERVICE

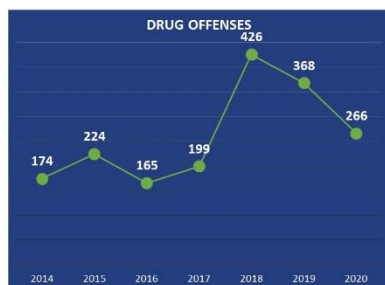


CITIZEN'S TOP 10 CALLS FOR SERVICE 2020

1. Call by Phone 2107
2. Extra Patrol-Vacation Checks 1000
3. Misc. Law Enforcement 857
4. Dog Case 752
5. 911 Open Line Hang Up 668
6. Disturbance 619
7. Well Being Check 614
8. Suspicious Circumstances 603
9. Alarm-Business 455
10. Suspicious Person 337

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TOTAL DRUG ENFORCEMENT



All employees of Martinsville Police Department, including officers and civilian, are certified in the administration of NARCAN

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AWARDS & RECOGNITION



Martinsville Police Department is always proud of officers who receive recognition for their hard work and accomplishments.

Center: Officer Jason Griffith wins the Crimestoppers Award

Clockwise from top left: Chase Bennett was promoted to sergeant; Jonathan Cox received the Fontaine Ruritan Award; Jason Vaughan was promoted to Sergeant; Jayme Clark wins the MADD Award.

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NEW EMPLOYEES

Martinsville Police Department welcomed three new officers to our department in 2020.



Newly sworn officers
David Koger, Matteu Harper and Alfredo Huerta

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GRANTS

BRYNE/JAG COMMUNITY POLICING GRANT \$79,484.00

This grant for 2020-2021 is to further the department's community policing efforts, increase outreach into the residential neighborhoods and crime prevention efforts in the business community. This grant also funds opportunities to assist with juvenile justice, blight abatement and retail theft reduction.

JAG TRAINING GRANT \$40,615.00

This grant provided training for every sworn member of the department in *Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics*, also known as ICAT. The course is designed to help officers learn to safely resolve critical incidents involving individuals who may pose a danger to themselves or others, but who are not armed with firearms. Reducing the need to use deadly force, upholding the sanctity of life, building community trust, and protecting officers from physical, emotional, and legal harm.

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GRANTS Continued

DMV GRANTS \$13,758.00

Each year, the Martinsville Police Department receives grant funding from the Division of Motor Vehicles. Based on statistical data, the grants are given to jurisdictions in an effort to reduce accidents, injuries, and even deaths related to vehicle crashes. There are two categories that the Martinsville Police Department receives.

- **Speed Enforcement:** To reduce speeding within the City of Martinsville, overtime funding is provided for officers to work RADAR within the city limits to reduce crashes.
- **Alcohol:** Provides officers the opportunity to work overtime to enforce the DUI laws to reduce alcohol related crashes.

CORONAVIRUS EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING GRANT \$50,000.00

The funding for this grant was to provide necessary equipment for the officers in response to the coronavirus pandemic. This equipment increased safety for the officers and the citizens for not only current emergency but also in the event any future such dangers should occur.

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STRATEGIC PLANNING STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FOR A MORE RESPONSIVE MPD IN 2021

The following is a list of strategic initiatives for the police department for the year 2020. Plans certainly change and this should in no way be interpreted as a promise or commitment, but here is our best effort at determining our priorities for the coming year.

- A Continued Concentration on Greater Community Policing
- Intelligence Led Policing
- Continue Major Drug Operation and strict enforcement of Drug Laws
- Personnel Development
- Traffic Safety

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PARTNERSHIPS

- Martinsville City Sheriff's Office
- Henry County Sheriff's Office
- Virginia State Police
- US Marshal Service
- ATF
- DEA
- Commonwealth Attorney's Office
- Martinsville Victim/Witness Program
- Department of Juvenile Justice
- Southside Survivor Response Center
- Department of Social Services
- 9-1-1 Center
- PRCJTA
- ICAC
- CAC
- Crime Stoppers
- SPCA of Martinsville/Henry County



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SNAPSHOTS



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Consider approval of an agreement with Sovah Health regarding Martinsville Fire and EMS providing non-emergency ambulance transportation services - Kris Schrader of the Fire Department summarized the agreement for non-emergency ambulance transportation with Sovah Health. Schrader detailed the Fire and EMS departments need for an additional transport vehicle, a radio system and two additional staff members to manage these transports between 8:00am-5:00pm. Schrader anticipates that this project will grow once they “get a feel” for the relationship with Sovah. Martinsville will be the preferred provider but there are other private transport agencies that can be called. The hospital reached out to the City because the current transports are delayed and not reliable. This will be operated as a separate division so non-emergency transports it will not affect the emergency medical services provided. Vice Mayor Bowles made the motion to approve the agreement; Council Member Martin seconded the motion with all Council Member voting in favor.

Consent agenda – Council Member Turner made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Vice Mayor Bowles seconded the motion with all Council Members voting in favor.

| BUDGET ADDITIONS FOR 07/27/21 | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| ORG | OBJECT | DESCRIPTION | DEBIT | CREDIT |
| BUDGET ADDITIONS | | | | |
| FY2021 | | | | |
| General Fund: | | | | |
| 01102926 | 405555 | Brownfields Grant - EPA | | 7,038 |
| 01812247 | 503136 | Brownfields - Hazardous - Consultant | 4,146 | |
| 01812249 | 503136 | Brownfields - Petroleum - Consultant | 2,892 | |
| | | Requisition #18 | | |
| 01100908 | 480412 | Misc. Revenue - Donations/Sheriff | | 4,205 |
| 01217078 | 506138 | Sheriff/Corrections - MC Equip/Maint | 4,205 | |
| | | Donations to the Sheriff's Department | | |
| 01102926 | 436142 | Non-Cat.Federal/US Marshal OT Grant | | 4,805 |
| 01311085 | 501200 | Police Department - Overtime | 4,805 | |
| | | Grant funds | | |
| Total General Fund: | | | 16,048 | 16,048 |

Business from the Floor - None

Comments by City Council – Council Member Martin appreciates Martinsville City police officers, stating that they do not get enough recognition. Council Member Turner shared that on July 3, George Lester, Harry Alley and John Hughes, three long-term Martinsville business

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owners, were recognized at the Farmers Market. He has received flags from the Congressmen who will present those to these citizens next week. Mayor Lawson explained that the US flags are displayed uptown for National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day. There has been a lot of conversation and questions on solar, Lawson encourages residents to do their due diligence and contact the Building Inspectors office for information prior to making any decisions. Lawson shared that there will be an educational forum related to solar in the near future

Comments by the City Manager – City Manager Towarnicki also encouraged residents to consult with the Electric Department prior to making decisions related to solar projects. The City was awarded the community development block grant for Pine Hall and work will begin later this year. The City also received a brownsfield grant for \$400,000 for the BB&T building and a \$3 million grant from EDA to assist with the Jones Creek project. Towarnicki touched on several projects including the Five-Points housing project with Nationwide Homes which, after months of delays with DEP, crews have started to install sewer lines. They hope to set five homes by September, 2021. The Chief Tassel project is getting new windows, there were delays but that project is moving forward. Construction is planned to start in September or October, 2021 on the Aaron Street Landmark project at the old American Furniture burn site. The Maple Street electric battery storage project has also begun. There were some issues with the after-hours number during a recent power-outage, those issues were addressed and hopefully resolved. Council Members asked that they be notified in these situations and suggested a message be added to the City Facebook page to keep residents updated. Mayor Lawson suggested looking into Code Red as an option to update residents also.

City Attorney Monday explained that the City cannot make recommendations about specific solar contractors or businesses and they cannot review private contracts, however, he encourages citizens to review those contracts closely. If it sounds too good to be true, then it probably is.

There being no further business, Vice Mayor Bowles made a motion to adjourn the meeting; the motion was seconded by Council Member Turner with all Council Members voting in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:35pm.

Karen Roberts
Clerk of Council

Kathy Lawson
Mayor